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ADA American Dental Association

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The Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research

The 1988 Survey of Dental Practice

Patient Visits to the Dentist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST
FOR THE YEAR 1987

	PAGE
LIST OF TABLES	i
HIGHLIGHTS	1
INTRODUCTION	2
ALL DENTISTS	3
INDEPENDENTS, SOLOS, AND INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980: OVERVIEW	8
INDEPENDENT DENTISTS: TABLES	14
SOLO DENTISTS: TABLES	19
INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980: TABLES	24
SURVEY METHODOLOGY	29
DEFINITIONS	31
APPENDIX: THE 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE QUESTIONNAIRE	33

LIST OF TABLES

ALL DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 5

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 5

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 6

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 6

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS..... 7

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 14

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 14

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 16

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 16

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS..... 18

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 15

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 17

LIST OF TABLES

SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 19

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 19

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 21

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 21

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS..... 23

SOLO DENTISTS EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 20

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 22

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 24

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 24

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 26

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS... 26

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS..... 28

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980 EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 25

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS..... 27

HIGHLIGHTS

* For independent dentists, the mean weekly total patient visits (scheduled, walk-in, and emergency visits) excluding those with hygienists appointments only was 66.0. Independent general practitioners treated 57.8, and independent specialists treated an average of 99.6 patients per week.

* The mean weekly total patient visits (scheduled, walk-in, and emergency visits) treated by independent dentists including hygienist visits was 82.0. Independent general practitioners treated an average of 76.0 patients per week, and independent specialists treated an average of 107.2 patients weekly.

* For all dentists, 7.2% of scheduled weekly appointments (including those primarily for hygienist treatment) were no-shows. Among independent dentists, this percentage was 7.0% and among solo dentists, it was 6.5%.

* For all dentists, the average number of emergency visits per week was 5.0. This figure was 5.0 for independent dentists, 4.8 for solo dentists, and 5.2 for independent dentists graduating since 1980.

* Independent dentists treated an average of 27.1 new patients per month. Independent general practitioners treated an average of 20.3 new patients per month, and independent specialists treated an average of 55.9 new patients per month.

* Approximately twenty percent of a practice's yearly patient load was received on a referral basis from another practice, dentist, or physician. This held true for the solo, independent, and all dentist groups. Among independent dentists graduating since 1980, an average of 14.9% of yearly patients were received on a referral basis.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics on patient visits to private practitioners in the U.S. during the year 1987. The data is drawn from the 1988 Survey of Dental Practice. Weekly and yearly patient loads are examined by determining the number of scheduled, no show, walk-in, emergency, and total visits. Separate analyses were performed to include and exclude appointments scheduled primarily for hygienist treatment. Dentists were asked to respond to the survey regarding patient care that they personally provided. Sources and numbers of new patients to the entire primary practice (i.e. including all dentists in the practice) were also examined. The mean number of new patients treated monthly in the entire practice, the yearly percentage of the practice's patients who were received on a referral basis and the sources of these patients were examined.

Data for weekly and yearly visits are provided. Please note that yearly data is obtained by multiplying weekly figures by the number of weeks worked per year.

Tables are presented separately for four groups: all dentists in private practice, independent dentists, solo dentists, and independent dentists graduating since 1980. The tables are subdivided to provide information for general practitioner and specialist groups as well as for all dentists in each of the four categories.

Note: There were too few respondents in the category "independent specialists graduating since 1980" to allow for reliable statistical analysis. Results are not presented for this group.

ALL DENTISTS

Patient Visits

The average number of total patient visits per week for all dentists, including hygienist visits, was 81.0. This figure includes scheduled, walk-in, and emergency visits. Excluding hygienist visits, the mean number of total patient visits per week was 65.2. The average number of total patient visits per week for a general practitioner excluding hygienist visits was 57.4. For a specialist, this number was 98.2.

For all dentists, there were about 2.4 patient walk-in visits and 5.0 emergency visits per week. Including hygienist visits, the mean number of patient no-shows was 5.8 per week; excluding hygienist visits, 4.4 per week. No-shows accounted for a loss of 7.1% of yearly scheduled appointments (excluding hygienist appointments).

The average number of emergency visits per year for all dentists was 238.3. General practitioners treated 234.7, and specialists saw 253.3 emergencies annually.

Annually, excluding hygienist visits, the total number of patient visits for all dentists was 3,123.1. The mean was 2,765.7 for general practitioners and 4,631.0 for specialists. Including hygienist visits, the annual figures were 3,889.6 total patient visits for all dentists, 3,629.2 for general practitioners, and 5,016.1 for specialists. In 1987, the average total number of different patients treated by a dentist in this group was 1,760.6. General practitioners treated an average of 1,870.9 different patients, and specialists, 1,377.5.

Patient Waiting Time

A patient of record had to wait an average of 6.5 days to get an initial appointment of a series. (This average excludes emergency cases.) For a new patient, the waiting time would have been an average of 7.0 days. Once a patient of record had arrived for an appointment, his or her average waiting time before being seen by the dentist would have been 8.0 minutes; for a new patient, the average waiting time was 8.4 minutes.

Among all general practitioners, patients of record had to wait an average of 6.4 days for an initial appointment, while new patients waited an average of 6.8 days. After arriving in the office, a patient of record waited an

average of 7.7 minutes; a new patient waited an average of 8.0 minutes.

Among all specialists, patients of record had to wait an average of 6.6 days for an initial appointment, while new patients waited an average of 7.5 days. After arriving in the office, a patient of record waited an average of 9.3 minutes; a new patient waited an average of 10.1 minutes before being seen by the dentist.

Patient Traveling Time

The dentists in this group reported that an average of 42.0% of their patients lived or worked within walking distance or a one to ten minutes drive from the primary practice. They reported that an average of 46.7% of their patients traveled 11 to 39 minutes and that an average of only 11.3% were located a 40 or more minutes drive from the primary practice.

The GPs in this group reported that an average of 44.2% of their patients lived or worked within walking distance or a one to ten minutes drive from the primary practice. They reported that an average of 45.4% of their patients traveled 11 to 39 minutes and that an average of 10.4% traveled 40 or more minutes to reach the primary practice.

Compared to GPs, specialists estimated higher percentages of patients traveling further to reach the practice office. Specialists reported that most of their patients (52.6%) traveled 11 to 39 minutes to reach the practice office. Approximately one third of their patients (32.3%) traveled one to ten minutes, and 15.1% were located 40 or more minutes from the primary practice.

New Patients

All dentists' primary practices treated an average of 27.9 new patients per month. Specialist practices saw an average of 55.4 new patients per month, and GP practices saw an average of 21.6 new patients monthly. Annually, an average of 20.2% of a practice's patients were received on a referral basis from another practice, dentist or physician. This figure represents two very different figures for specialists and GPs. Among all GPs, only 9.3% of the practice's yearly patients were received through referrals, but among all specialists, 64.4% of yearly patients were referred.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

ALL DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	72.8	1240	110.9	396	80.1	1636
WALK-IN VISITS	2.6	1286	1.7	420	2.4	1706
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.9	1278	5.3	415	5.0	1693
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	67.7	1207	100.6	381	74.0	1588
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	75.3	1188	106.1	369	81.0	1557
NO-SHOWS	5.2	1207	8.0	381	5.8	1588

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	53.7	1275	102.1	419	63.2	1694
WALK-IN VISITS	2.6	1286	1.7	420	2.4	1706
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.9	1278	5.3	415	5.0	1693
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	49.9	1251	92.8	407	58.3	1658
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.4	1231	98.2	392	65.2	1623
NO-SHOWS	3.8	1247	7.1	406	4.4	1653

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

ALL DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3499.0	1225	5262.6	393	3839.0	1618
WALK-IN VISITS	123.8	1286	79.9	420	115.2	1706
EMERGENCY VISITS	234.7	1278	253.3	415	238.3	1693
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3265.9	1207	4750.4	381	3548.3	1588
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3629.2	1188	5016.1	369	3889.6	1557
NO-SHOWS	252.0	1207	388.2	381	277.9	1588

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2588.6	1275	4826.1	419	3028.3	1694
WALK-IN VISITS	123.8	1286	79.9	420	115.2	1706
EMERGENCY VISITS	234.7	1278	253.3	415	238.3	1693
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2406.6	1251	4374.5	407	2790.2	1658
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2765.7	1231	4631.0	392	3123.1	1623
NO-SHOWS	182.1	1247	344.0	406	213.7	1653

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

ALL DENTISTS

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
NEW PATIENTS MONTHLY	21.6	1232	55.4	376	27.9	1608
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
YEARLY PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS RECEIVED ON A REFERRAL BASIS	9.3	1211	64.4	398	20.2	1609
PERCENTAGE OF NEW PATIENTS REFERRED FROM:						
GENERAL PRACTITIONERS	2.3	1180	54.7	410	13.0	1590
SPECIALISTS	4.7	1180	7.9	402	5.3	1582
PATIENTS	73.5	1205	29.5	406	64.7	1611
DENTAL REFERRAL SERVICE	1.7	1168	1.2	398	1.6	1566
OTHER PROFESSIONALS (M.D.'s)	3.8	1174	3.5	404	3.7	1578
DIRECT MAIL OR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS	4.7	1174	1.1	401	4.0	1575
CAPITATION OR CLOSED PANEL CONTRACTS	2.7	1174	1.1	402	2.4	1576
OTHER	5.1	1157	1.5	398	4.3	1555

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

INDEPENDENTS, SOLOS, AND INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980: Overview

Patient Visits

As indicated in the following table, the number of weekly patient visits did not differ greatly across groups. Only the independent dentists graduating since 1980 differed from the other groups by reporting a slightly lower average number of patients treated per week.

Mean Number of Total Patient Visits Per Week (Scheduled Visits Plus Walk-Ins and Emergency Visits) NOT Including Hygienist Visits, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	65.2	57.4	98.2
Independent Dentists	66.0	57.8	99.6
Solo Dentists	64.6	57.3	96.8
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	57.9	56.0	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

On average, all dentists saw 5.0 patients on an emergency basis per week in 1987. Specialists saw slightly more, 5.3, while general practitioners saw 4.9 emergency patients per week. The following table details the average number of emergency visits per week for different dentist groups.

Mean Emergency Visits Per Week, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	5.0	4.9	5.3
Independent Dentists	5.0	4.8	5.4
Solo Dentists	4.8	4.8	4.5
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	5.2	5.1	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

The following table presents the number of no-shows as a percentage of scheduled visits. For all dentists, the overall loss of weekly scheduled appointments (including hygienist appointments) due to no-shows was 7.2%. This figure is higher for independent dentists graduating since 1980 (9.4%) and somewhat lower for solo dentists (6.5%).

Mean "No-Shows" as a Percentage of Scheduled Visits Per Week, Including Hygienist Visits, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	7.2%	7.1%	7.2%
Independent Dentists	7.0	7.1	7.2
Solo Dentists	6.5	6.8	5.4
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	9.4	9.4	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

The average number of different patients seen by a dentist was similar for all, independent, and solo dentist groups. This average was, expectedly, lower among independent dentists graduating since 1980, many of whom would have been in the process of building up their practice load during 1987.

Mean Number of Total Different Patients Treated by the Dentist, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	1760.6	1870.9	1377.5
Independent Dentists	1780.2	1893.2	1396.2
Solo Dentists	1726.2	1870.9	1200.1
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	1585.7	1635.8	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

Patient Waiting Time

The following table compares the average number of days that dentists in each group estimated their patients would have to wait for an initial appointment of a series (excluding emergency visits).

Average Waiting Time for an Initial Appointment (excluding emergencies), 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists			
Patient of Record	6.5 days	6.4 days	6.6 days
New Patient	7.0	6.8	7.5
Independent Dentists			
Patient of Record	6.4	6.4	6.6
New Patient	6.9	6.8	7.5
Solo Dentists			
Patient of Record	6.3	6.3	6.4
New Patient	6.9	6.8	7.2
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980			
Patient of Record	6.0	6.0	*
New Patient	6.0	6.1	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

The average number of days a patient of record had to wait for an initial appointment was similar for all groups analyzed and ranged from 6.0 to 6.6 days. New patients generally had a slightly longer wait which ranged from 6.8 to 7.5 days for all groups except independent dentists graduating since 1980. For these younger dentists, the average wait for a new patient was no longer than the average wait for a patient of record.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

The following table details the average time a dentist estimated that his or her patients would have to wait for their appointments after arriving in the dentist's office.

Average Patient Office Waiting Time
After Arriving for an Appointment, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
		(in minutes)	
All Dentists			
Patient of Record	8.0	7.7	9.3
New Patient	8.4	8.0	10.1
Independent Dentists			
Patient of Record	7.9	7.5	9.3
New Patient	8.2	7.8	10.1
Solo Dentists			
Patient of Record	7.6	7.3	8.7
New Patient	7.9	7.6	9.1
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980			
Patient of Record	8.2	8.3	*
New Patient	8.1	8.3	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

Patient Traveling Time

The table on the next page details the dentists' average estimates of the distances their patients traveled to reach the primary practice office. For all groups except the independent dentists graduating since 1980, most patients traveled 11 to 39 minutes to reach the primary practice office. Among the dentists graduating since 1980, a higher percentage were estimated to be within walking distance or a one to ten minutes drive than were in any other group, and a lower percentage were estimated to live or work a 40 or more minutes drive from the practice than were in the other groups.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

Mean Reported Patient Traveling Time to Reach the Office, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists			
Patients traveling:			
by foot or a 1-10 minutes drive	42.0%	44.2%	32.3%
11-39 minutes drive	46.7	45.4	52.6
40+ minutes drive	11.3	10.4	15.1
Independent Dentists			
Patients traveling:			
by foot or a 1-10 minutes drive	41.7	44.0	32.1
11-39 minutes drive	46.9	45.5	52.7
40+ minutes drive	11.4	10.5	15.1
Solo Dentists			
Patients traveling:			
by foot or a 1-10 minutes drive	42.5	44.3	34.1
11-39 minutes drive	46.4	45.6	50.3
40+ minutes drive	11.1	10.1	15.6
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980			
Patients traveling:			
by foot or a 1-10 minutes drive	49.6	50.5	*
11-39 minutes drive	40.7	40.6	*
40+ minutes drive	9.8	8.9	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

New Patients

As is detailed on the following table, the primary practices of most of these dentist groups treated approximately 27 new patients per month. Only the solo dentists differed and treated an average of only 20.8 new patients per month. Specialists and GPs followed similar patterns in all groups, with specialists treating more new patients per month than GPs. Among all groups except the independent dentists graduating since 1980, the average yearly percentage of patients received on a referral basis was about twenty percent. For independent dentists graduating since 1980, this percentage was 14.9%. Consistently across groups, the specialists received just under seven times as many of their yearly patients on a referral basis as did general practitioners (approximately 64% vs. approximately 9%).

Mean Number of New Patients Monthly, 1987

	All (Weighted)	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	27.9	21.6	55.4
Independent Dentists	27.1	20.3	55.9
Solo Dentists	20.8	17.5	36.3
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	27.4	26.4	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1988 Survey of Dental Practice.

The tables on the following pages present information for independent dentists, solo dentists, and independent dentists graduating since 1980 about patient visits, both including and excluding hygienist appointments. The groups were also further refined to provide statistics for dentists employing hygienists within each category.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	73.6	1169	112.2	383	81.2	1552
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1208	1.7	407	2.3	1615
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.8	1201	5.4	402	5.0	1603
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	68.5	1138	101.8	368	75.0	1506
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	76.0	1119	107.2	357	82.0	1476
NO-SHOWS	5.2	1138	8.1	368	5.7	1506

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.1	1198	103.6	404	64.0	1602
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1208	1.7	407	2.3	1615
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.8	1201	5.4	402	5.0	1603
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.4	1176	94.2	392	59.1	1568
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.8	1156	99.6	379	66.0	1535
NO-SHOWS	3.7	1172	7.2	391	4.4	1563

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	88.4	730	117.6	88	90.8	818
WALK-IN VISITS	2.3	753	0.9	103	2.1	856
EMERGENCY VISITS	5.1	746	4.4	101	5.1	847
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	82.0	714	108.3	86	84.1	800
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	89.6	705	113.3	85	91.5	790
NO-SHOWS	6.4	714	8.1	86	6.6	800

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST - INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3538.2	1154	5327.5	381	3891.1	1535
WALK-IN VISITS	120.3	1208	80.0	407	112.2	1615
EMERGENCY VISITS	233.5	1201	257.2	402	238.3	1603
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3308.5	1138	4810.4	368	3599.8	1506
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3668.9	1119	5068.6	357	3937.5	1476
NO-SHOWS	249.4	1138	392.2	368	277.1	1506

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2611.5	1198	4896.3	404	3069.9	1602
WALK-IN VISITS	120.3	1208	80.0	407	112.2	1615
EMERGENCY VISITS	233.5	1201	257.2	402	238.3	1603
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2433.4	1176	4438.0	392	2831.8	1568
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2789.2	1156	4696.5	379	3163.3	1535
NO-SHOWS	178.3	1172	348.8	391	212.2	1563

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4261.7	716	5649.3	87	4376.8	803
WALK-IN VISITS	108.9	753	43.9	103	102.9	856
EMERGENCY VISITS	247.6	746	207.6	101	243.9	847
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3960.0	714	5179.5	86	4060.3	800
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4329.2	705	5422.9	85	4419.2	790
NO-SHOWS	312.1	714	382.3	86	317.9	800

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
NEW PATIENTS MONTHLY	20.3	1164	55.9	366	27.1	1530
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
YEARLY PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS RECEIVED ON A REFERRAL BASIS	9.3	1144	64.2	388	20.3	1532
PERCENTAGE OF NEW PATIENTS REFERRED FROM:						
GENERAL PRACTITIONERS	2.3	1112	54.6	396	13.3	1508
SPECIALISTS	4.7	1114	7.8	388	5.4	1502
PATIENTS	73.8	1136	29.8	392	64.8	1528
DENTAL REFERRAL SERVICE	1.7	1102	1.2	384	1.6	1486
OTHER PROFESSIONALS (M.D.'s)	3.8	1107	3.4	390	3.7	1497
DIRECT MAIL OR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS	4.6	1107	1.2	387	3.9	1494
CAPITATION OR CLOSED PANEL CONTRACTS	2.4	1107	1.1	388	2.2	1495
OTHER	4.9	1094	1.4	385	4.2	1479

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	73.7	886	110.6	267	80.5	1153
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	913	1.4	286	2.3	1199
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.8	909	4.5	281	4.8	1190
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	68.9	861	100.9	253	74.6	1114
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	76.3	848	104.5	245	81.3	1093
NO-SHOWS	5.0	861	6.0	253	5.2	1114

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	53.7	905	101.8	284	62.8	1189
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	913	1.4	286	2.3	1199
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.8	909	4.5	281	4.8	1190
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.1	886	93.2	273	58.1	1159
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.3	872	96.8	263	64.6	1135
NO-SHOWS	3.6	882	5.2	272	3.9	1154

SOURCE: AMEICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENTS VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	92.8	505	112.8	51	94.2	556
WALK-IN VISITS	2.2	519	1.0	64	2.1	583
EMERGENCY VISITS	5.2	515	3.6	63	5.1	578
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	86.0	495	99.8	49	87.0	544
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	93.5	492	104.2	49	94.3	541
NO-SHOWS	6.7	495	10.9	49	7.0	544

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3543.0	873	5257.5	265	3859.0	1138
WALK-IN VISITS	119.6	913	65.6	286	109.4	1199
EMERGENCY VISITS	234.2	909	216.6	281	230.9	1190
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3330.9	861	4775.1	253	3590.0	1114
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3689.7	848	4944.0	245	3911.6	1093
NO-SHOWS	242.3	861	289.0	253	250.7	1114

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2593.8	905	4804.8	284	3012.4	1189
WALK-IN VISITS	119.6	913	65.6	286	109.4	1199
EMERGENCY VISITS	234.2	909	216.6	281	230.9	1190
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2419.6	886	4388.2	273	2786.9	1159
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2768.4	872	4562.3	263	3097.2	1135
NO-SHOWS	173.7	882	249.1	272	187.8	1154

SOURCE: AMEICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4474.8	493	5451.8	50	4543.4	543
WALK-IN VISITS	105.9	519	49.8	64	101.2	583
EMERGENCY VISITS	251.1	515	170.5	63	244.4	578
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	4164.8	495	4784.9	49	4207.3	544
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4528.1	492	4997.3	49	4560.4	541
NO-SHOWS	325.4	495	509.2	49	338.0	544

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
NEW PATIENTS MONTHLY	17.5	893	36.3	259	20.8	1152
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
YEARLY PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS RECEIVED ON A REFERRAL BASIS	9.4	876	63.7	276	19.7	1152
PERCENTAGE OF NEW PATIENTS REFERRED FROM:						
GENERAL PRACTITIONERS	2.3	835	54.6	279	12.8	1114
SPECIALISTS	4.5	835	7.4	274	5.1	1109
PATIENTS	74.7	855	31.0	276	66.2	1131
DENTAL REFERRAL SERVICE	1.7	831	1.3	270	1.6	1101
OTHER PROFESSIONALS (M.D.'s)	3.5	832	2.8	274	3.4	1106
DIRECT MAIL OR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS	4.4	831	1.2	273	3.8	1104
CAPITATION OR CLOSED PANEL CONTRACTS	1.7	833	0.7	274	1.5	1107
OTHER	5.0	823	1.7	271	4.3	1094

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	67.3	154	--	17	68.9	171
WALK-IN VISITS	2.7	158	--	17	2.6	175
EMERGENCY VISITS	5.1	156	--	17	5.2	173
SCHEDULED VISITS TPEATED	61.1	151	--	17	62.5	168
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	69.0	151	--	17	70.5	168
NO-SHOWS	6.5	151	--	17	6.5	168

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	52.5	156	--	17	54.5	173
WALK-IN VISITS	2.7	158	--	17	2.6	175
EMERGENCY VISITS	5.1	156	--	17	5.2	173
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	48.3	154	--	17	50.1	171
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	56.0	153	--	17	57.9	170
NO-SHOWS	4.6	153	--	17	4.8	170

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	81.9	90	--	5	83.2	95
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	94	--	5	2.6	99
EMERGENCY VISITS	5.5	92	--	5	5.5	97
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	73.5	88	--	5	74.5	93
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	81.7	88	--	5	82.7	93
NO-SHOWS	8.3	88	--	5	8.6	93

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3293.1	153	--	17	3375.3	170
WALK-IN VISITS	130.4	158	--	17	130.1	175
EMERGENCY VISITS	250.9	156	--	17	257.3	173
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2993.9	151	--	17	3069.5	168
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3381.7	151	--	17	3463.0	168
NO-SHOWS	311.4	151	--	17	318.2	168

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST				ALL - WEIGHTED	
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*			
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2572.8	156	--	17	2673.8	173
WALK-IN VISITS	130.4	158	--	17	130.1	175
EMERGENCY VISITS	250.9	156	--	17	257.3	173
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2367.8	154	--	17	2459.6	171
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2746.5	153	--	17	2845.3	170
NO-SHOWS	225.0	153	--	17	233.8	170

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4005.7	89	--	5	4068.7	94
WALK-IN VISITS	123.5	94	--	5	125.2	99
EMERGENCY VISITS	270.7	92	--	5	268.7	97
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3598.0	88	--	5	3648.2	93
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4001.0	88	--	5	4050.5	93
NO-SHOWS	407.6	88	--	5	421.1	93

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980

NUMBER AND SOURCES OF NEW PATIENTS, 1987

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST*		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
NEW PATIENTS MONTHLY	26.4	157	--	17	27.4	174
	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER
YEARLY PERCENTAGE OF PATIENTS RECEIVED ON A REFERRAL BASIS	10.7	152	--	17	14.9	169
PERCENTAGE OF NEW PATIENTS REFERRED FROM:						
GENERAL PRACTITIONERS	2.4	156	--	17	6.0	173
SPECIALISTS	4.2	154	--	17	4.7	171
PATIENTS	69.4	157	--	17	66.4	174
DENTAL REFERRAL SERVICE	1.9	154	--	17	1.9	171
OTHER PROFESSIONALS (M.D.'s)	3.8	155	--	17	3.8	172
DIRECT MAIL OR COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS	9.6	155	--	17	9.1	172
CAPITATION OR CLOSED PANEL CONTRACTS	1.5	154	--	17	1.4	171
OTHER	6.8	154	--	17	6.3	171

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1988 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

*The number of cases was too small to allow for reliable statistical analysis.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 1988 Survey of Dental Practice (SDP) was an updated version of the long-form 1985 SDP. This survey was sent to 4% of the dentists who were known to be actively engaged in the private practice of dentistry. The purpose of the survey is to provide reliable information on characteristics of the private practice of dentistry in the United States.

Sampling

The population consisted of 133,823 dentists who, based on the 1982 Distribution of Dentists, were known to be in private practice, even if only part-time.

The Distribution of Dentists is a dental census that is conducted periodically by the Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research of the American Dental Association. Although the 1982 distribution was the most recent complete census at the time the sample was drawn, the sampling frame is updated periodically by adding information about recent graduations, retirements, and deaths when available. Dentists with an unknown practice type were included in the sampling frame.

The sample was ordered by type of practice (general practitioner or specialist). Within each type, the sample was sorted by dental school and graduation year. A random sample from each type of practice was selected. Since specialists comprise a small percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to ensure adequate numbers for statistical analysis (i.e., the proportion of specialists sampled is higher than the actual percentage of specialists in the population). It should be noted that the sample was drawn in such a way as to make statements about general practitioners and specialists as a whole. For any given specialty, there may not have been enough dentists responding to make reliable statements about that individual specialty.

Data Collection

The 1988 SDP was initially mailed in April 1988. Two follow-up mailings to non-respondents occurred in May and June 1988. A telephone follow-up to non-respondents was conducted in July and August 1988. Coding, hand-editing, and computer processing were completed in October 1988. The final response rate was computed after the individuals who were either retired, disabled, deceased, not in private practice, or had unknown addresses were eliminated from the sample. The adjusted sample size was used to calculate the final response rate of 43.1%.

Weighting the Sample

Since the proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual percentage in the dental population, it is necessary to account for this imbalance when making statements about the total dental population. This correction is accomplished by developing and applying a weighting factor to each sampled dentist.

Weights were calculated for general practitioners and specialists separately, by dividing the percentage of each in the population by the percentage in the sample. The proportion of general practitioners in the population is 80%, specialists, 20%. The percentage of general practitioners in the sample is 74.9%, of specialists, 25.1%.

The weights were computed as follows:

General Practitioner	.80/.749 = 1.068731
Specialist	.20/.251 = 0.795392

These weights were employed in the calculations of means and medians for cases in which general practitioners and specialists were combined (i.e., when statements were made about "all" solo or "all" independent dentists). The weights were also used when percentages of dentists in various categories were computed. In these cases, the totals as well as the percentages are weighted, making the totals smaller or larger than those for the actual sample.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions of several terms and phrases are provided in this section to assist with the interpretation of data contained in the tables in this and other reports. In general, the dentists included in this report were working in private practice as a primary occupation. In addition, all dentists had started in their current (i.e., 1987) practice prior to 1987.

All Dentists: This group of dentists contains all dentists responding to the survey, including those who are employed by a dentist or dental practice, rather than owning or sharing in the ownership of a practice.

Dental Practice Personnel (All Staff): This group includes dental hygienists, chairside assistants, dental laboratory technicians, secretary/receptionists, bookkeepers and business personnel. Dentists employed by the practice are **NOT** included.

Full-Time and Part-Time: For purposes of this report, full-time was defined as working in the practice at least 32 hours per week. Part-time was defined as working in the practice less than 32 hours per week.

Hourly Salary: The hourly salary reported is computed by dividing the weekly salary by the number of hours worked.

Independent Dentists: An independent dentist owns or shares in the ownership of a dental practice. This ownership status includes sole proprietors, partners, and those who are shareholders in an incorporated practice.

Mean: The mean is the simple average of values reported by the dentists responding to the survey. The mean is calculated by summing the values reported and then dividing the sum by the number of dentists responding to the question.

Mean Per Year: The mean per year is the average value reported for a year's period of time (e.g., mean number of appointments per year). The per year figures were determined by multiplying the per week values by the number of weeks worked that year.

Nonowner Dentists (Employed): A nonowner dentist may be employed in an incorporated or unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis. A nonowner dentist may be an independent contractor, but he may not be a shareholder in an incorporated practice.

Nonsolo Dentists: Nonsolo dentists work in a dental practice with at least one other dentist. Some of these dentists may be employed by the owner dentists in the practice.

No-Shows: The total of patient no-shows is defined as the difference between the number of appointments scheduled and the number of scheduled visits treated. It was assumed that the number of scheduled visits treated was equal to or less than the number of appointments scheduled.

Regions: The following is a breakdown of the states in each region.

New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD
South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA, WV
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

Scheduled Visits Treated: Scheduled appointments that were kept by the patients.

Solo Dentists: A solo dentist is the sole owner of the practice and is the only dentist working in the practice. The dentist may be either a sole proprietor or the sole shareholder in an incorporated practice. Solo dentists are a subset of independent dentists.

Total Patient Visits: Total patients visits is the sum of walk-in visits, emergency visits, and scheduled visits that were treated (i.e., excluding no-shows).

Weighting: Since specialists comprise a smaller percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to insure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. The proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual proportion of specialists in the total population of dentists. Please note that individual specialties were not oversampled, and, therefore, only statistics on specialists as a group are presented. Statistics computed for all dentists were weighted to reflect national proportions.

ADA American Dental Association
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312 440-2500

1988 Survey of Dental Practice

Please answer all questions by **circling** the number corresponding to the most appropriate response, except where a fill in the blank is requested.

1. Which of the following best describes your **primary and/or secondary occupation(s)** during 1987? (Please circle one response for **each** column.)

	Primary Occupation	Secondary Occupation
a. Private practice (full- or part-time)	00	00
b. Dental school faculty/staff member	01	01
c. Armed Forces	02	02
d. Other federal services (e.g., VA, PHS)	03	03
e. State or local government employed	04	04
f. Hospital staff dentist	05	05
g. Intern/resident	06	06
h. Other student	07	07
i. Other health/dental organization staff member (e.g., NIDR)	08	08
j. Not in practice	09	09
k. Retired	10	10
l. Occupation unrelated to dentistry	11	11
m. **No secondary occupation**	—	12

Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire if you were in **private practice** during any part of 1987. If you were **not involved** in the **private practice** of dentistry during **any part** of 1987, please return the questionnaire. Thank you.

Individual Dentist Questions

The following questions pertain to you as an individual private practitioner. If you changed practices (i.e., worked in more than one **primary practice** during 1987), please give information on the practice in which you treated patients for the greatest number of months.

2a. Were you **announcing yourself and practicing** as a specialist in an ADA recognized specialty area (dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics) in your **primary practice** in 1987?

Yes — 1
No (Skip to question 3.) — 2

b. Which **one** of the following specialties are you actively practicing?

Oral and maxillofacial surgery — 10
Endodontics — 15
Orthodontics — 20
Pediatric dentistry — 30
Periodontics — 40
Prosthodontics — 50
Oral pathology — 60
Public health — 82

3. In what year did you **first** become associated with the **primary practice** where you practiced during 1987? 19 ____

4. Which **one** of the following **best** describes your employment status when you **first** became associated with that practice?

a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice — 1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership — 2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice — 3
d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder — 4
e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis — 5
f. Independent contractor — 6
g. Other, please specify ____

5. Which **one** of the following **best** describes your employment status in that practice during 1987?

a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice — 1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership — 2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice — 3
d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder — 4
e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis — 5
f. Independent contractor — 6
g. Other, please specify ____

6. Please answer the following about the time **you personally** spent in your primary practice during 1987.

a. Total number of weeks worked (excluding vacation) ____ weeks

b. Total number of **hours per week** spent in the practice ____ hours per week

c. Number of hours per week spent **treating patients** in the practice ____ hours per week

d. Estimate the average scheduled length of an appointment in 1987 ____ minutes

e. During a typical week, what percentage of your **time treating patients** in the **primary practice** was devoted to each of the following procedures? (If none, enter zero.)

	Percentage of Time Per Week
Diagnostic (exams, x-rays, etc.)	____%
Preventive (fluoride treatments, prophylaxis, patient education, pit and fissure sealants, etc.)	____%
Operative (restoration, amalgams, inlays, etc.)	____%
Prosthodontic	____%
Endodontic	____%
Periodontic	____%
Orthodontic	____%
Oral and maxillofacial surgery	____%
General services (anesthesia, patient management, counseling, miscellaneous)	____%
Total	**100%**

7 The following represent possible contractual agreements with third parties. Indicate if **any** apply to you in your practice by estimating the percentage of patients involved in each. Enter a zero if the category does not apply.

	Percentage of Patients
a Service benefit plan participating agreement (e.g., Delta Dental Plan or Blue Cross and Blue Shield with participating agreement)	____ %
b Capitation (e.g., Prudential DMO, Safeguard Health Plans, CIGNA Dental Health)	____ %
c Fee schedule agreement (e.g., agreement with any insurance company that is contracting with Insurance Dentists of America)	____ %
d Straight risk pool (e.g., Individual Practice Association Program)	____ %
e Capitation-risk pool combination (e.g., Delta Dental Pacesetter Program)	____ %
f Discount of usual fees agreement (e.g., Aetna Fast Track Program)	____ %
g Other contractural agreement	____ %

8 During the entire year of 1987, indicate the **total** number of **patients you treated** in the **primary practice.** (This number should be different than the total number of appointments below.)

____ total patients

9 Please indicate the following regarding patient care that **you personally** provided in the **primary practice** during 1987.

The average number of:

a **Appointments scheduled** per week **excluding** those with hygienist appointments only)

____ appointments per week

b **Walk-in visits** per week that **you** treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) (if none, enter zero)

____ visits per week

c **Emergency visits** per week that **you** treated (i.e., no appointments scheduled) (if none, enter zero)

____ visits per week

d **Scheduled visits** per week that **you actually** treated, **excluding** those with hygienist appointments only)

____ visits per week

10 During a typical week, approximately what percentage of your time treating patients in your **primary practice** was devoted to implant services? (if none, enter zero)

____ %

11 Which **one** of the following best describes **you** in your **primary practice** during 1987?

	Busyness
a Too busy to treat all people requesting appointments	1
b Provided care to all who requested appointments but was overworked	2
c Provided care to all who requested appointments and was not overworked	3
d Not busy enough, could have treated more patients	4

Entire Primary Practice Characteristics

12 What was the zip code of your **primary practice** during 1987?

____ zip code

13 **Including yourself,** please indicate the number of full- or part-time **dentist positions** in the **entire primary practice** during 1987. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Dentist Positions
a Number of **owner** dentists (i.e., sole proprietor, partners, or shareholders)	____
b Number of **non-owner** dentists (i.e., employed dentist's, associates and non-shareholders) (if none, enter zero)	____

14 **Including yourself,** please indicate the number of full- and part-time **dentist positions** in each of the following practice areas in the **primary practice** during 1987.

	Number of Dentist Positions	
	full-time	**part-time**
a General practice	____	____
b Oral and maxillofacial surgery	____	____
c Endodontics	____	____
d Orthodontics	____	____
e Pediatric dentistry	____	____
f Periodontics	____	____
g Prosthodontics	____	____
h Oral pathology	____	____
i Public health	____	____
j Other, please specify ____	____	____

15 Please indicate the number of full-time (32 hours per week or more) and part-time (less than 32 hours per week) **employee positions** in the **primary practice** during 1987. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Employee Positions	
	full-time	**part-time**
a Dental hygienist(s)	____	____
b Chairside assistant(s)	____	____
c Secretary/receptionist(s)*	____	____
d Dental laboratory technician(s)	____	____
e Bookkeeper, business personnel	____	____
f Other, please specify ____	____	____

***Note:** A secretary or receptionist who also provides chairside assistance at least 50% of the time should be counted as a chairside assistant.

16 For the **entire primary practice,** indicate the number of chairside assistants (full- and part-time) employed in 1987 who received formal training in a structured program.

a Full-time ____
b Part-time ____

17 Please provide the following regarding all dental hygienist(s) appointments and visits in the **entire primary practice** during 1987. (If no hygienists were employed, skip to question 19.)

The average number of:	**Dental Hygienist(s)**
a **Appointments scheduled** per week primarily for hygienist(s) treatment	____ appointments per week
b **Scheduled visits** per week that were actually treated by all hygienist(s)	____ visits per week

18 Please provide the following for **each dental hygienist** in the **entire primary practice** during 1987. If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box.

	Not Applicable (Please check box.)	Annual Salary/ Commission (in dollars) per year	Weeks Worked per Year weeks	Hours Worked per Week hours	Length of Experience Prior to Employment in this Practice years	Length of Experience Prior to Employment in this Practice months	Length of Employment in this Practice years	Length of Employment in this Practice months
Dental Hygienist(s):								
Position #1	☐	$						
Position #2	☐	$						
Position #3	☐	$						
Position #4	☐	$						

19 Please provide the following for **each employee** in the **entire primary practice** during 1987. If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box.

	Not Applicable (Please check box.)	Weekly Salary (in dollars) per week	Hours Worked per Week hours	Length of Experience Prior to Employment in this Practice years	Length of Experience Prior to Employment in this Practice months	Length of Employment in this Practice years	Length of Employment in this Practice months
Chairside Assistant(s):							
Position #1	☐	$					
Position #2	☐	$					
Position #3	☐	$					
Position #4	☐	$					
Position #5	☐	$					
Secretary/Receptionist(s):							
Position #1	☐	$					
Position #2	☐	$					
Position #3	☐	$					
Dental Laboratory Technician(s):							
Position #1	☐	$					
Position #2	☐	$					
Bookkeeping/Business Personnel:							
Position #1	☐	$					
Position #2	☐	$					
Please use the following space to provide information for **all personnel not included above in questions 18 and 19.**							
_____		$					
_____		$					
_____		$					
_____		$ per week	hours	years	months	years	months

20 For the **entire primary practice** in 1987, please indicate the following regarding the employment of auxiliary staff (If none, enter zero.)

	Dental Hygienists	Chairside Assistants
a Number of open positions filled in 1987	_____	_____
unfilled in 1987	_____	_____
b Average number of weeks position(s) was open	_____	_____

21 What is the estimated starting salary in your **primary practice** for the following auxiliary positions with no prior experience?

	Starting Salary
a Dental hygienist	$_____/hour
b Chairside assistant	$_____/hour

22 In the **primary practice** during 1987, indicate whether or not and to whom the following benefits were offered. (If the practice did not offer the benefit, please check the appropriate box.)

	Not Offered	Dental Hygienist(s)	Chairside Assistant(s)	Dental Laboratory Technician(s)	Secretary/ Receptionist(s)
a Medical insurance	☐	1	2	3	4
b Dental insurance (or reduced costs)	☐	1	2	3	4
c Separate malpractice insurance	☐	1	2	3	4
d Life insurance	☐	1	2	3	4
e Profit sharing	☐	1	2	3	4
f Pension plan	☐	1	2	3	4
g Paid sick leave	☐	1	2	3	4
h Paid vacation days	☐	1	2	3	4
i Reimbursement for professional organization dues	☐	1	2	3	4
j Reimbursement for continuing education courses	☐	1	2	3	4
k Incentive program					
percent of total production	☐	1	2	3	4
percent of production above certain limits	☐	1	2	3	4
set bonus if budgeted goals are met	☐	1	2	3	4
l Other, please specify _____					

23 Which of the following personnel in your **primary practice** use gloves, mask, protective eyewear or gowns when working with all or selected patients?

	Gloves			Mask			Protective Eyewear			Protective Gowns		
	all	some patients	none	all	some patients	none	all	some patients	none	all	some patients	none
a Dentist (self)	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
b Dental hygienist(s)	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
c Chairside assistant(s)	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
d Other, please specify _____	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3

24 Approximately how long have **you personally** used the following barrier techniques?

	Number of Years	Number of Months	Do not use (Check box.)
a Gloves	_____	_____	☐
b Mask	_____	_____	☐
c Protective eyewear	_____	_____	☐
d Protective gowns	_____	_____	☐

25 If **you** wear gloves, do you change them after every patient?

Yes	1
No	2
Not applicable	3

26a Did the **primary practice** utilize computer processing services during 1987?

Yes	1
No (Skip to question 27.)	2

b Were these computer services provided by an

In-house computer?	1
Outside computer service? (Skip to question 26d.)	2
Other, please specify _____	

c Who was the primary user of the computer system?

Dentist(s)	1
Secretary (receptionist(s))	2
Bookkeeping (business personnel	3
Other, please specify _____	

d For which of the following functions was a computer utilized? (Please circle as many as apply.)

Patient accounting and billing	1
Maintaining expense records	2
Processing insurance forms	3
Maintaining treatment records	4
Diagnosis and monitoring of treatment	5
Scheduling patients	6
Office newsletters	7
Form letters	8
Other, please specify _____	

e Which of the following was most important in your choice of a computer?

Price	1
Service/support	2
Training	3
Hardware	4
Software	5
Other, please specify _____	

f How were you introduced to your computer?

Advertisement	1
Trade show	2
Mailing	3
Telephone call	4
Other, please specify _____	

g If given the opportunity, would you purchase the same computer system again?

Yes	1
No	2

h Is your computer

Single user?	1
Multi user?	2

i If given the opportunity to purchase another computer system, which of the following would be most important to you?

Price	1
Service/support	2
Training	3
Hardware	4
Software	5
Other, please specify _____	

27 In the **entire primary practice** during 1987

a What was the total number of operatories? _____ operatories

b How many of these were fully-equipped operatories (i.e., where a dentist can perform at least restorative dentistry)? _____ operatories

c What was the total square feet of office space? _____ square feet

28 Did the **primary practice** operate its own dental laboratory during 1987?

Yes	1
No	2

29 Were any of the following items of equipment utilized by the **primary practice** during 1987?

	Yes	No
a Composite light curing unit	1	2
b High speed air handpiece with fiber optics	1	2
c Panoramic x-ray unit	1	2
d Ultrasonic or sonic scaling unit	1	2
e Electrosurgical unit	1	2
f Nitrous oxide analgesic equipment	1	2
g Modular instrument delivery system (wall divider)	1	2
h Automatic x-ray film processor	1	2
i Autoclavable handpiece	1	2
j Scavenger system for nitrous oxide	1	2
k Intraoral video camera	1	2
l Laser	1	2
m Biological indicator (spore test)	1	2

30 Which of the following **best** describes your **primary practice** location during 1987?

a Metropolitan area with a population greater than 500,000	
central city location	1
suburban location	2
b Metropolitan area with a population between 100,000 and 500,000	
central city location	3
suburban location	4
c City of 50,000-99,999 population	5
d City of 20,000-49,999 population	6
e Rural (less than 20,000 population)	7

31 Which of the following **best** describes the building where the **primary practice** was located during 1987?

a Home	1
b Professional building	2
c Shopping center	3
d Other commercial building	4

32 Do either of the following characterize your **primary practice** where you worked in 1987?

	Yes	No
a Retail or drug store facility	1	2
b Franchise (practice marketed under a trade name)	1	2

33 a In 1987, was your **primary practice** located in more than one office?

Yes	1
No (Skip to question 34.)	2

b If yes, indicate the number of offices associated with your **primary practice** _____

If you were a solo practitioner during 1987, please skip to question 36

34 Please indicate the following regarding patient care by the **entire primary practice** during 1987.

The average number of	Entire Practice
a. **Appointments scheduled** per week (**excluding** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ appointments per week
b. **Walk-in visits** per week that were treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
c. **Emergency visits** per week (i.e., no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
d. **Scheduled visits** per week that were **actually** treated (**excluding** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ visits per week

35 During the entire year of 1987, indicate the **total** number of **patients** treated by the **primary practice.** (This number should be different than your total number of appointments above.) _____ total patients

36 Approximately what percentage of the **entire practice's** yearly patients are received on a referral basis from another practice, dentist or physician? _____ %

37a During a typical month, about how many **new patients** were treated in the **entire primary practice** where you practiced in 1987? (If none, enter zero and skip to question 38.) _____ new patients per month

b For 1987, please indicate the percentage of **new patients** from the following sources. (If none, enter zero.)

	Entire Practice Sources of New Patients
Other dentists	_____ %
General practitioners	_____ %
Specialists	_____ %
Patients	_____ %
Dental referral service	_____ %
Other professionals (e.g., M.D.s)	_____ %
Direct mail or commercial advertising (TV, radio, newspaper, etc.)	_____ %
Capitation/closed panel contracts	_____ %
Other, please specify _____	_____ %
Total	**100%**

38 For the **entire primary practice** during 1987, how long did an average patient of record and average new patient have to **wait:**

	Entire Practice Waiting Time	
	patient of record	**new patient**
a. For the **initial appointment** of a series (excluding emergency cases)?	_____ days	_____ days
b. To see a dentist **after** the patient arrived for a **scheduled appointment?**	_____ minutes	_____ minutes

39 Of the 52 weeks in 1987, how many weeks was the **primary practice** scheduled to be open (not including emergency cases) to provide care to patients? _____ weeks

40 Approximately what percentage of the patients who visited the primary practice

	Entire Practice Patient Characteristics
a. were	
14 years of age or younger?	_____ %
15 to 64 years of age?	_____ %
65 years of age or older?	_____ %
Total	**100%**
b. were members of families whose annual income is estimated to be	
under $10,000?	_____ %
$10,000 to 29,999?	_____ %
$30,000 or more?	_____ %
Total	**100%**
c. were	
covered by a private insurance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care?	_____ %
covered by a public assistance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care?	_____ %
not covered by an insurance program?	_____ %
Total	**100%**
d. were	
male?	_____ %
female?	_____ %
Total	**100%**
e. were physically handicapped and/or mentally handicapped?	_____ %
f. were members of a racial minority?	_____ %

41 Please indicate the percentage of patients who travelled various distances (from work or home) to your **primary practice** office.

a. Patients close (within walking distance or within 1-10 minute drive or transportation)	_____ %
b. Patients within 11-39 minutes drive or transportation	_____ %
c. Patients within 40 or more minute drive or transportation	_____ %
Total	**100%**

42 For each of the dental procedures listed below, indicate the usual fee the **entire primary practice** charged during 1987. (If you usually provided the procedure free of charge, enter zero in the appropriate blank. If the procedure is not routinely performed, check the appropriate box.) Please do not report ranges.

		Not Done	Usual Fee
a	Periodic oral examination (excluding radiographs)	☐	$
b	Bitewing radiographs: for films	☐	$
c	Dental prophylaxis: for adults	☐	$
d	Pit and fissure sealant: per tooth	☐	$
e	Topical fluoride treatment (including prophylaxis): child	☐	$
f	Amalgam restoration: one surface, permanent (including polishing)	☐	$
g	Fixed unilateral space maintainer	☐	$
h	Root canal therapy—molar (includes treatment plan, clinical procedures and follow-up care, excluding final restoration): one canal	☐	$
i	Periodontal scaling and root planing—per quadrant	☐	$
k	Complete upper acrylic-base denture, including six-months post-delivery care	☐	$
l	Extraction (including local anesthesia and post-operative care): single tooth	☐	$

43 What was **your** 1987 net income (after practice expenses and business taxes) from: (Please include salary, commission and/or dividends.)

		Net Income
a	Your primary practice?	$
b	Your secondary practice (if applicable)?	$
c	Other income from dentistry (i.e., teaching, research, other practice, etc.)?	$

44 In the **entire primary practice,** what was the total amount of fees charged for the dental care provided during 1987 (annual billing)? $

45 What percentage of the **gross receipts** were received: (If none, enter zero.)

		Gross Receipts
a	As direct patient payment?	%
b	As payment from government programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or other public insurance)?	%
c	As direct payment from private insurance carriers?	%
d	From other sources of payment? Please specify _____	%
	Total	**100%**

46 During 1987, were any of the expenses of the **entire primary practice** (dental facilities or staff) shared with other dentists?

Yes 1
No 2

If you shared expenses (dental facilities or staff) with any other practices, please report **only your entire primary practice's** share of the expenses.

47 For each item below, what were the **total professional expenses** for the **entire primary practice** during 1987? (If no expenses were incurred for specific items, please enter zero.)

		Expenses
a	Yearly rent	$
b	Yearly mortgage (including interest)	$
c	Total salaries, wages and commissions of non-dentist employees	$
d	Total salaries, wages and commissions of employed dentists (**exclude** salaries of owner dentists or shareholders of incorporated practices)	$
e	Total salaries, wages and commissions of officers/shareholder dentists (**for incorporated practices only**)	$
f	Employee benefits of personnel, not included in salaries, (e.g., insurance, pensions, etc.)	$
g	General office supplies	$
h	Dental supplies	$
i	Commercial dental laboratory charges	$
j	Advertising expenses	$
k	Annual depreciation costs of dental and office equipment	$
l	Taxes on business and business property	$
m	Repairs of dental or office equipment	$
n	Insurance related to dental office (liability, fire, etc.)	$
o	Legal and professional fees	$
p	Professional liability (malpractice insurance)	$
q	Interest on business indebtedness (excluding mortgage)	$
r	Drugs	$
s	Utilities (telephone, electricity, etc.)	$
t	Professional expenses (travel to meetings, society dues, etc.)	$
u	Bad debts	$
v	Other, please specify _____	$
w	**Total Professional Expenses**	$

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project. Please return this questionnaire by folding and placing tape as indicated. Drop it in the mail, postage is paid.